

Standard 4. Diversity

4.2 Areas for Improvement Cited in the Action Report from the Previous Accreditation Review

Summarize activities, processes, and outcomes in assessing each of the AFIs cited for the initial and/or advanced program levels under this standard. [12,000 Character Limit]

1. Candidates have limited interaction with faculty members from diverse ethnic and racial groups.

In the summer of 2015, a fifth Key Strategic Objective of “Diversity and Inclusion” was added to the Northwest Strategic Plan. This objective confirms Northwest’s commitment to the value of diversity and the initiatives associated with the plan show good-faith efforts to increase or maintain faculty diversity. The Northwest Human Resources office is assisting the PEU to expand the scope of position search efforts to attempt to increase the diversity of the PEU faculty.

In order to ensure all candidates interact with diverse faculty to gain insight from their unique perspectives regarding educational issues, the Multiculturalism in Education course was designed to be co-taught by a cadre of diverse faculty. Instructors work collaboratively to expose all candidates to interactions with each instructor. Currently sections of the course are being taught by Dr. David Kiene, faculty member residing on the Maryville campus, Dr. Anthony Moore, Assistant Superintendent for the Raytown School District, and Mr. Juan Rangel, Director of the Gateway to College program for at-risk high school students associated with Donnelly College. Each instructor represents a particular racial/ethnic population: Dr. Kiene is Caucasian, Dr. Moore is African-American, and Mr. Rangel is Hispanic. Working together, these instructors bring to life discussions on various issues related to working in diverse school settings and ensure all candidates are exposed to varying points of view.

Candidates also gain insights from faculty members with PK-12 experiences in schools with diverse student bodies. Candidates’ understandings of diverse cultures is also enhanced by working with faculty who have traveled abroad extensively as faculty incorporate their international experiences into the courses they teach.

2. Candidates in initial programs have limited opportunities to interact with peers from diverse racial and ethnic groups.

Opportunities to interact with peers from diverse racial and ethnic groups have been created in conjunctions with the Office of International Programs. All candidates must complete a portion of the 10 required hours of diversity experiences associated with the Multiculturalism in Education course by participating in one or more of these activities. Five specific initiatives allow candidates to work with ESL students in an educational setting. These initiatives include the following:

- 1) **Conversation Partner (CPs):** teacher candidates meet with international students once a week for 1 hour of conversation. It's an opportunity for ESL students to meet with peers and learn about American culture in an informal atmosphere. It provides candidates with the opportunity to explore issues faced by these students in an American classroom.
- 2) **Tutoring:** Teacher candidates meet with an international student to help them with a specific language skill (reading, speaking, pronunciation, etc.). Candidates help ESL students decipher instructions for classroom participation and assignment requirements.
- 3) **Culture Class Presenter and/or Assistant:** International students attend a culture class where they get information about specific topics of American culture (football, politics, holidays, etc.). Teacher candidates assist the instructor with topics based on their expertise.
- 4) **Activity Buddy:** teacher candidates chaperone ESL students to different activities (football/basketball games, Downtown Trick or Treat, Trip to the Farm, etc.). Candidates attend the event and help explain the different activities and/or answer questions.
- 5) **Practicum:** Candidates in practicum courses have the opportunity to complete their required practicum hours by teaching the academic English class to international students.

Candidates engage with diverse panels of international students and faculty members to discuss their educational experiences during the Multiculturalism in Education course. The panel members discuss educational experiences in their home countries as well as their experiences as racial/ethnic minorities in American classrooms. Candidates complete a written reflection linking these discussions with the diversity proficiencies. Another panel in the Multiculturalism in Education course includes students from minority and/or impoverished backgrounds. The panel discussions focus on the commonalities of students from urban/low social economic settings and how best to meet their educational needs.

A new initiative will pair our candidates with those from historically black colleges in Missouri: Harris Stowe State University in St. Louis and Lincoln University in Jefferson City. These partnerships would facilitate virtual co-teaching conversations that would be mutually beneficial to all programs. Partnerships would be created in conjunction with assignments in particular courses, thus ensuring all teacher candidates would engage in these activities.

3. The unit does not ensure field experiences with students from diverse racial and ethnic groups.

A redesign of professional education requirements which integrates instruction and field experiences associated with the Missouri Teacher Standards into a three-phase sequence embeds the proficiencies aligned with working with diverse students and in diverse school settings throughout the modules. Targeted field experiences aligned with these standards are included in

each module of the program redesign. The unit has worked with partners in the St. Joseph and Kansas City area districts to coordinate these experiences in schools that qualify as diverse setting under the guidelines established by the Diversity Committee and the Missouri Department of Elementary and Secondary Education. These purposefully coordinated field experiences will ensure candidates' exposure to diverse students in the P-12 setting. By design, teacher candidates in all programs, including Early Childhood, Elementary, Middle School, Secondary, Special Education, and advanced programs, will have to have completed and logged into the TK-20 system all diversity hour requirements. The Diversity Committee will review the logged experiences prior to student teaching. Thus, it is assured that no teacher candidate is placed in a student teaching position without previous field experiences in diverse settings. Each field activity requires a reflection of how the experience translates to his or her development in becoming a culturally responsive teacher. This reflection is included on the Diversity Hour Credit Form that is signed by the onsite supervisor and the student's advisor. The expectation of candidates is that they discuss the learning experiences as they relate to the diversity proficiencies.

The Diversity Committee will oversee and review the assessments and log for each teacher candidate to verify the student has met the proficiencies outlined by the committee. Candidates will be required to have "certification" before being allowed to student teach. Candidates will be required to chart their hours of diverse field experiences through the use of Diversity Hour Credit forms. Many of these experiences are designed as part of the candidate's course work. At present, practicum classes and the Multiculturalism in Education course have a diverse field experience required for its students. Logs, artifacts, and records of diverse placements are stored by using TK20.

4. The unit does not ensure that all candidates, initial and advanced, have curriculum and field experiences that provide a well-grounded framework for understanding ethnic/racial diversity, including English-language Learners.

Our redesigned, competency-based professional education program is aligned with the Missouri Teacher Standards. This sequence of coursework integrates the development of knowledge, skills, and dispositions related to diversity throughout three transitional phases. Assessments measuring candidate's growth and development towards becoming a culturally responsive educator will be administered in each of the three phases, i.e. at admission to teacher education, admission to student teaching, and completion of the program. All teacher candidates will complete the integrated coursework and assessments outlined in the phases to demonstrate mastery of the competencies. Field experiences incorporated into each module are designed to augment the relevant competencies. Purposeful placements in these field experiences will ensure all teacher candidates have experiences in diverse settings.

As part of the program redesign work, a set of diversity proficiencies was created to explore candidates' positions in the following areas: 1) exploring one's own socio-historical background and its role in identity formation, 2) analyzing one's own biases and assumptions, 3) examining one's interactions with others, and 4) synthesizing an understanding of a system of inequities. The committee recognized the need for directed diversity experiences for all candidates and incorporated these experiences within the phases.

In the first phase of the redesign candidates undergo initial training with an inequity model and are assessed on understanding of their own socio-historical background and its role in identity formation as well as analyzing their own biases and assumptions. They are then required to complete field experience hours in racially diverse educational settings to complete activities aligned with the proficiencies integrated into each module.

In addition to the integrated competencies related to diversity within the phases of the redesign, The Council on Teacher Education (COTE) approved a course, EDUC 61-569 Multiculturalism in Education, as a degree requirement for all teacher candidates. This course focuses on the knowledge and skills required to be a culturally responsive educator. Exploring the impact of diversity in and out of the classroom, this course examines working with students in racially diverse educational settings. It was developed by a group of faculty with experience in multicultural education as well as knowledge of key resources available in racially diverse communities. This course provides a measureable benchmark in the second phase of the redesign to assess a candidate's fluency in the diversity proficiencies before his or her student teaching. Students are pre and post surveyed during the course to track development in adapting instruction to individual student's learning styles based on multicultural influences. The course incorporates six aspects of creating a classroom climate that models democracy, equity, and social justice. Students learn to become a culturally responsive teacher by placing students at the center of learning, establishing a classroom that promotes human rights, believing all students can learn, acknowledging the life experiences of students and their families, analyzing oppression in schools and society to understand racism, and modeling social justice and equity in the classroom with his or her interactions with students, families and the community.

All candidates for initial licensure complete three ELL modules designed to develop the skills needed when working with ELL students. At the end of each module candidates are assessed on their mastery of the information. Candidates work with peers on ELL issues as part of the initiatives created by the Office of International Programs. At the advanced program level EDUC 61-695, Philosophy of Education or EDUC 61-649, Issues in Education, include curriculum exploring racially diverse issues. The practicum/internship requirements embedded in these courses are designed to provide experiences in racially diverse school settings.